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Department of State

TELEGRAM

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ACTION EUR-00

INFO LOG-00 COPY-01 ADS-00 INR-10 SS-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 HA-09 L-03 PM-10 PA-01
OMB-01 USIE-00 SP-02 SNP-01 PRS-01 P-02 /042 W
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P 091457Z APR 87
FM AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7137
INFO AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

CONFIDENTIAL BUDAPEST 03273

E.O. 12356:DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, HU, UR
SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE OF WALLENBERG STATUE BY BUDAPEST
CITY COUNCIL

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.
2. THE APRIL 9 EDITION OF NEPSZABADSAG CONTAINS THE FIRST PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF GOH ACCEPTANCE OF THE WALLENBERG STATUE.
3. IN AN ARTICLE DEALING WITH DECISIONS OF THE BUDAPEST CITY COUNCIL IT IS NOTED THAT THE COUNCIL'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAS APPROVED THE PROPOSAL TO ERECT A STATUE OF RAUL WALLENBERG AND THAT THE STATUE WILL BE DEDICATED DURING THE COURSE OF "PEACE MONTH" IN MAY. A RADIO REPORT ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 8 NOTED THE ROLE WALLENBERG PLAYED IN SAVING 10,000 JEWS THROUGH THE ISSUANCE OF PROTECTIVE PASSPORTS TO THEM AND THEN FURTHER COMMENTED THAT HE HAD DISAPPEARED AFTER THE WAR. THERE WAS NO FURTHER COMMENT OR BACKGROUND PROVIDED ON THE ORIGIN OF THE STATUE OR WALLENBERG'S DISAPPEARANCE.

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4. THE STATUE HAS BEEN STANDING FOR THE LAST TWO DAYS

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE	INFORMATION	DATE: 10/14/87
() RELEASE	() CONFIDENTIAL	() SECRET
() EXEMPT	() NO FORN DISSEM	() NO AUTOMATIC DISSEM
() DENY	() DECLASSIFIED	() NO DISSEM
() DELETE	() NON-RESPONSIVE	() NO DISSEM
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IN A PROMINENT LOCATION ON SZILAGYI ERZSEBET FASOR APPROXIMATELY TWO KILOMETERS FROM THE AMBASSADORS RESIDENCE. IT CONSISTS OF AN EIGHT FOOT HIGH BRONZE FIGURE OF WALLENBERG SURROUNDED BY GRANITE SLABS. ON ONE OF THE SLABS IS A DESIGN OF THE PREVIOUS WALLENBERG STATUE COMPLETED SHORTLY AFTER THE WAR BUT NEVER DEDICATED, DUE TO SOVIET SENSITIVITIES.

5. WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON PRECISELY WHEN THE STATUE WOULD BE DEDICATED ALTHOUGH SERIOUS THOUGHT IS BEING GIVEN TO HAVING THE CEREMONY TAKE PLACE AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS WHICH HAS BEEN SCHEDULED FOR EARLY MAY. WE ARE INFORMED THAT THE DEDICATION PLAQUE WILL READ SIMPLY "PRESENTED IN MEMORY OF RAUL WALLENBERG BY THE BUDAPEST CITY COUNCIL."

6. AT THE MOMENT GOH IS GIVING MORE PLAY TO THE DEDICATION OF A MEMORIAL IN MEMORY OF OLOF PALME WHICH WILL BE UNVEILED ON APRIL 13, ONE WEEK BEFORE KADAR'S VISIT TO SWEDEN. THE MEMORIAL WAS PREPARED ON VERY SHORT NOTICE BY PROMINENT SCULPTOR AND PATRIOTIC PEOPLE'S FRONT VICE PRESIDENT IMRE VARGA WHO HAS ALSO EXECUTED THE MUCH LARGER WALLENBERG PROJECT. VARGA WAS GIVEN LESS THAN TWO WEEKS TO DESIGN AND EXECUTE THE PALME MEMORIAL.

COMMENT:

THE DECISION ON THE WALLENBERG STATUE WAS A HIGHLY
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CONTROVERSIAL ONE GIVEN LINGERING SOVIET SENSITIVITIES AND THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST WALLENBERG STATUE. THE DECISION TO ERECT IT CAME AFTER CONSIDERABLE PROLONGED DEBATE AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE PARTY.
PALMER

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